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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 001259

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SUBJECT: RAZALI'S RANGOON MEETINGS DISAPPOINT

REF: A. RANGOON 1239

[B](#). USUN NEW YORK 2392

[C](#). RANGOON 1207

Classified By: COM Carmen Martinez for Reasons 1.5 (B,D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: UN Special Envoy Razali departed Rangoon on October 2nd, calling his trip a "total failure." Though he did not achieve any tangible results, his visit was important in assessing the degree of open mindedness on all sides for the SPDC's recently announced "road map to democracy." All on the opposition side seemed willing to give the regime's plan a try, as long as they could freely participate. The regime, though, would not commit to this yet. Sadly, judging from the statements of the autocrat Senior General, it may not ever. End summary.

"Total Failure," But an "Historic Opportunity"

[1](#)2. (SBU) On the evening of October 2nd, UN Special Envoy Razali told assembled diplomats that his three day visit to Rangoon had been necessary, but "a total failure" in getting tangible results. After initial delays, Razali was able to meet once with National League for Democracy (NLD) leader Aung San Suu Kyi (ASSK) at her house. He also met at length with Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, and briefly with State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) Chairman Senior General Than Shwe. Razali also spent several hours meeting on October 1st with representatives of ethnic minority political factions.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Razali said that he got the impression during his meetings with the opposition groups that the Prime Minister's recently outlined "road map" for democratization, beginning with a reconvening of the National Convention was being viewed as an "historic opportunity." However, for this opportunity to bear fruit, all sides had to participate actively and freely both in establishing the modalities for the Convention, and in drafting the actual constitution.

ASSK Ready to Rejoin Battle

[1](#)4. (SBU) Unfortunately, the Prime Minister could not (or would not) commit to including the eager opposition groups in this way. Though General Khin Nyunt did not "reject out of hand" Razali's notion that the NLD and other groups be included in the National Convention Convening Commission, the Prime Minister said it was too early to agree to such a step.

Razali opined, and ASSK later agreed, that the Prime Minister did not have the "mandate" to agree to such an initiative -- hinting that the final say on this matter lay with the Senior General.

[1](#)5. (SBU) According to the Special Envoy, ASSK looked healthy, was in good spirits, and said she expected to be fully recovered "in a few weeks." He noted that she shared the cautious optimism of the ethnic opposition groups, and said she was willing "under certain circumstances" to work with the new Prime Minister and his road map proposals. However, ASSK was adamant that she, the detained members of the NLD Central Executive Committee, and those jailed during the Depeyin attacks, be released before she would cooperate in any way. She insisted, further, that she would not accept release unless these others were released with her. ASSK was also concerned that NLD offices, shuttered after the May 30th attack, be re-opened. However, she apparently did not make this a condition for cooperation with Khin Nyunt.

[1](#)6. (C) Razali indicated that ASSK was still "incensed" over the May 30th Depeyin ambush. However, he said in their conversation she put the need for an investigation of the attack into "perspective," saying that such an inquiry was essential "someday."

They're Coming to Take Me Away, Ha, Ha!

[1](#)7. (C) Perhaps the most sobering moment of the briefing was Razali's description of his session with Senior General Than Shwe. Though the Senior General was in an "affable mood," and had "lost weight," he came after Razali right away asking

if "one person was more important than the state, than 52 million people?" Razali responded that one person was not, but that this one person represented the welfare of the other 51,999,999. Than Shwe also insisted that there was no need for political parties to represent the will of the people, pointing out that the recent "mass rallies" (totally stage managed by the regime; see ref C) in favor of the road map showed that the people already support the government and its policies. This statement verifies in our mind the fact that the Senior General has completely lost touch with reality -- whether willfully or because of his sycophantic advisors is unknown.

Comment: Not Much Hope, For Now

18. (C) The mood of Razali's briefing was resigned, but not pessimistic. Clearly the opposition groups, including ASSK, are willing to keep an open mind on the SPDC's road map. Furthermore, the Special Envoy said that he was "impressed" by the Prime Minister's determination "to do something." A pall, though, was cast by the acceptance, spoken and unspoken, that the less flexible Senior General was still pulling all the strings. Than Shwe's clear hatred of ASSK, and his complete removal from reality, are major impediments to prospects for genuine progress under the regime's new initiative. Nonetheless, Razali indicated that he'd try to come back in a couple of months -- apparently quashing rumors that this visit would be his last if there were no success -- to see if there was more room for compromise or dialogue.
Martinez